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Testimony for H.B. 6032

2/4/2015

An Act Clarifying Provisions of the General Statutes concerning the use of barrier systems for certain plantings.

Dear Environmental Committee Members,

I would like to thank you for your hard work in passing unprecedented legislation Public Act 13-82 and Public Act 14-100 regarding *Phyllostachys* Running Bamboo. Raised H.B. 6032 needs to include clear wording that this very destructive plant shall not be maintained or allowed to exist within the 40-foot buffer zone regardless of when the bamboo was planted.

We need further clarification of the present statute to allow clear enforcement. Enforcement should be narrowed to local zoning officers. Presently there are five entities named for enforcement and the result has been too much finger pointing: you do it, no you do it, with no enforcement. DEEP has insufficient resources and presently they told me: “we can’t help you” when I mentioned running bamboo. I request the resulting \$100.00 fines be assigned to the municipality to encourage strict enforcement and to solve the “another unfunded mandate” complaint.

Please include the COURTS shall enforce the 40 foot no bamboo buffer zone with attorney fees, costs and disbursements paid to the prevailing party. This will enable even limited income victims the ability to

contact an attorney and engage the court system to find relief from a neighbor's invasion of private property.

I support the intent of H.B.6032 but it needs to be clarified and strengthened to enable enforcement. *Phyllostachys* running bamboo is not the soft wispy innocent looking plant that growers/sellers would like you to believe. Running bamboo quickly destroys native vegetation by sucking up all soil nutrition and moisture to grow into a 40 foot plus tall bully that becomes 7-8 inches in circumference, and an impenetrable jungle eager to invade septic tanks, wetlands, foundations, and even our state parks. *Phyllostachys* is a giant timber bamboo and as the fastest growing plant on earth it easily survives blizzards, droughts and hurricanes. Spraying cancer causing herbicides such as Roundup, or Barren's damages the above ground growth but does not kill the segmented off rhizomes thereby enabling fast regrowth of this destructive plant. See the attached photos.

Our neighboring State of New York has listed *Phyllostachys aureosulcata* as an invasive species. The USDA Weed Risk Assessment for *Phyllostachys aureosulcata* has resulted in a rating of High Risk invader. (August 2012) Documentation of running bamboo rhizomes traveling offsite by water and taking root without the aid of humans, qualifies *Phyllostachys aureosulcata* to be listed in Connecticut as an invasive species. Please remember this fact and the over 600 infestations in our beautiful state and declare it invasive.

Thank you for allowing me to present this information and thank you for your hard work on this problem. (See photos attached)

Sincerely,
Theresa Groff



Phyllostachys aureosulcata - yellow groove bamboo infestation in Norwich, CT

Images by Caryn Rickel



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